CHELTENHAM WATERS.

INAUGURATION OF THE CENTRAL SPA.

ON the invitation of the Corporation of Cheltenham, of the Council of the Chamber of Commerce, and of the Medical Committee, a number of visitors were entertained at Cheltenham on June 20th to celebrate the inauguration of the Central Spa which the Corporation of Cheltenham has recently established at the Town Hall with a view of reviving the use of the Cheltenham waters.

As is well known, Cheltenham was long celebrated for its waters, but of late years their use has not been encouraged by the town. The number of persons, however, drinking the waters has been gradually increasing, and efforts are now being made to provide greater facilities. It is believed that many people who go abroad would spend their money at home if proper facilities were afforded, and it is on that account that Cheltenham has adapted its Town Hall as a central spa, consisting of an elaborate and elegant suite of assembly rooms grouped around a fine central hall tastefully decorated, with a maple wood floor laid in a special way on springs for dancing.

The waters from the different springs in the town have been brought to the central spa and are dispensed from an artistic fountain placed in a well-furnished pump room. The following analyses of the Cheltenham waters were made by Professor Thorpe in 1893:

No. 1. Cheltenham Alkaline Water.

	Grains per Gallon.
Sodium chloride	503.520
Sodium bromide	0.339
Sodium iodide	0.155
Sodium sulphate	96.545
Sodium silicate	1.227
Sodium bicarbonate	28.973
Potassium sulphate	4.033
Lithium chloride	Traces
Calcium carbonate	14.038
Calcium phosphate	Traces
Magnesium carbonate	13.227
Manganous carbonate	Traces
Ferrous carbonate	0.212
Aluminium phosphate	Traces
Ammonium bicarbonate	0.085
Organic matter	Traces

No. 2. Cheltenham Alkaline Water.

	Grains per Gallon.
Sodium chloride	310.985
Sodium bromide	0.106
Sodium iodide	0.056
Sodium sulphate	148.435
Sodium silicate	1.120
Sodium bicarbonate	29.498
Potassium sulphate	2.345
Lithium chloride	Traces
Calcium carbonate	13.724
Calcium phosphate	Traces
Magnesium carbonate	12.541
Manganous carbonate	Traces
Ferrous carbonate	0.134
Aluminium phosphate	Traces
Ammonium bicarbonate	0.071
Organic matter	Traces

No. 3. Cheltenham Alkaline Water.

	Grains per Gallon.
Sodium chloride	466.470
Sodium bromide	0 388
Sodium iodide	0.099
Sodium sulphate	115.095
Sodium silicate	2.961
Sodium bicarbonate	38.961
Potassium sulphate	4.520
Lithium chloride	Traces
Calcium carbonate	4.583
Calcium phosphate	Traces
Magnesium carbonate	10.866
Manganous carbonate	Traces
Ferrous carbonate	0.056
Aluminium phosphate	Traces
Ammonium bicarbonate	0.078
Organic matter	Traces

No. 4. The Cheltenham Magnesia Water.

	Grains per Gallon.
Sodium chloride	27.980
Sodium bromide	0.015
Sodium iodide	0.037
Sodium sulphate	60.893
Sodium silicate	1.469
Potassium sulphate	4.779
Lithium chloride	Traces
Calcium carbonate	36.372
Calcium sulphate	63.460
Magnesium sulphate	117.659
Manganous carbonate	0.023
Ferrous carbonate	0.038
Aluminium phosphate	0.011
Ammonium nitrate	0.018
Organic matter	Traces

No. 5. The Cheltenham Natural Aperient Water.

This water is No. 4 Cheltenham Magnesia Water strengthened by evaporation to a constant degree of concentration, and to such an extent that a moderate quantity being taken the single draught will act as a decided aperient.

No. 6. The Cheltenham Soda Sulphate Saline.

	Grains per Gallon.
Sodium chloride	391.710
Sodium bromide	0.001
Sodium iodide	0.021
Sodium sulphate	155.720
Sodium silicate	1.763
Potassium sulphate	9.990
Lithium chloride	Traces
Calcium carbonate	27.200
Calcium sulphate	2.447
Magnesium carbonate	14.115
Magnesium sulphate	22.667
Manganous carbonate	Traces
Ferrous carbonate	0.021
Aluminium phosphate	Traces
Organic matter	Traces

As many of the visitors to the ceremony of inauguration of the Central Spa were expected at Cheltenham on June 19th, a banquet at the Queen's Hotel was arranged for their entertainment by the Medical Committee and the Chamber of Commerce. The chair was taken by Mr. J. T. Agg-Gardner, President of the Chamber of Commerce. After the loyal toasts had been duly honoured, Mr. E. B. Wethered, Local Government Board Inspector of the Midland District, proposed the toast of "The Visitors," and pointed out that if the results of the analysis of the Cheltenham waters made by Professor Thorpe in 1893 were compared with those obtained by Professor Abel and Professor Rowney fifty years previously, it would be found that the composition of the waters had undergone practically no change in the course of the half century. It was simply because of the vagaries of fashion that the wells of Cheltenham were not resorted to to-day as they were in the days when George III was King. Dr. F. J. Wethered, in replying to this toast, said that the Cheltenham waters possessed salts in such proportion as rendered them most valuable for hydro-therapeutic treatment; to enable patients to secure the greatest benefit from the waters a certain regimen must be laid down and strictly adhered to, and that could only be directed and enforced by medical men, and Cheltenham was fortunate in having doctors resident in the town skilled in the knowledge of hydro-therapeutics. Cheltenham possessed cheerful surroundings and beautiful scenery.

Mr. Allum also acknowledged the toast, and he was followed by Dr. Armstrong of Buxton, who, in proposing "Success to the Cheltenham Spa," said that if there were mineral springs of similar constituents in Germany they would be resorted to by thousands of drinkers every year. Cheltenham also had the necessary adjunct for a summer cure in Cleeve Hill, and its Winter Garden was all that was required for a winter cure. The capital golf links would entertain the relatives of the patients, and the beautiful walks and public gardens at Montpelier and Pittville were great attractions. He discussed the application of the various Cheltenham waters, and advised that No. 1 Water should be used as a Plombière douche. This toast was replied to by the Mayor, Mr. W. N. Skillicorne, who hoped that the town would take its proper place among the health resorts of Europe.

Dr. Kirkland also responded to this toast, and quoted the opinion of Sir Hermann Weber that the three best-known muriated sulphate waters were those of St. Brides-les-Bains, Cheltenham and St. Gervais.

Councillor Stroud, the Chairman of the Mineral Waters Committee of the Corporation, who also acknowledged the toast, said that since May 10th, when it was opened, many persons had been taking the waters at the Central Spa. Dr. Cardew, in proposing the toast of "The Chairman," declared that people should not be misled by misconceptions in regard to the humidity of Cheltenham. The Chairman, in the course of his reply, expressed the hope that the visitors to Cheltenham for drinking the waters would include travellers from the Continent.

On the morning of May 20th the visitors were taken on a tour of inspection in and around Cheltenham, returning in time to welcome Dr. J. F. Goodhart on his arrival from London. Dr. G. B. Ferguson then conducted Dr. Goodhart on a visit of inspection to the different places of interest in the town.

In the afternoon a large company assembled at the Town Hall for the ceremony of inaugurating the Central Spa. The proceedings were opened by the Mayor, Mr. W. N. Skillicorne, who declared that with the assistance of the medical men the town might achieve great things.

Dr. E. T. Wilson, in introducing Dr. Goodhart to the audience, said that the Central Spa might be regarded as an earnest of what the town was going to do, and he referred with satisfaction to the enormous population to the north of Cheltenham on which they might draw. He then called upon Dr. Goodhart to deliver his address entitled, How shall we Drink?

Dr. J. F. Goodhart said that he had readily accepted the invitation to say something as to the importance of their new Central Spa, because no one could feel more strongly that they were doing a real service to the sick and ailing. It was not clear how and why the Cheltenham waters fell out of repute. He had several times spoken to residents upon their remissness in allowing such a "talent" as their mineral springs to lie unproductive. There was no need to go into details of the special characters of the Cheltenham waters. They were of great use in various conditions, and they were not like any others in the United Kingdom. They also approached more or less to the waters of Carlsbad and others abroad that had attained world-wide renown. He knew no reason why their waters and their springs should not be equally efficacious if people would but come, and it was clearly to the interest of the town to make them accessible. He supposed most people would admit it to be true that all such waters were more efficacious when taken at their source than when sold in bottle. Probably, in some measure, the composition of the water altered by keeping. He did not know what their able medical officer of health, Dr. Garrett, might have to say about radium, that bit of the sun come down to earth to keep them expectant and attentive to the possibilities of the future, but he fancied that radio-activity and all the new knowledge derived from that source might well have some bearing upon the potency of water taken fresh. But at their source or not, any one of their natural waters there contained, above the two or three chief constituents, some twelve other constituents present in minute quantity, and who should say that one and all in some subtle combination were not potent to influence the habits or tendencies of the several organs, and, in so doing, to arrest the beginnings of disease? He thought that under certain circumstances, particularly as people arrived at and passed middle age, their tissues acquired the habit of producing products of imperfect combustion in excess. Those were they to whom the doctor applied the much-scoffed-at term of gout. It must be admitted that comparatively few had true gout, but most people after 50 arrived at that mildly decadent condition when their organs did not work so automatically towards the right or so naturally made for health as was the case in earlier years, and the blood and juices became charged with impurities, a condition which needed some generally descriptive term, and which those waters in some way seemed to help them to rid themselves of. He could quite conceive that natural waters of suitable kinds might so gently and yet definitely modify, say, the specific gravity of these juices, the activity of their regulatory nerves, the powers of their absorbents, the circulation of the fluids, that the natural habit, that was, health, might be revived. The question of the influence of climate on health was very obscure. How was it, as he often asked, and had never yet been answered, that so many of them were ambulatory barometers or hygrometers? Why, one solitary corn would take off the keenness of the joy of a lifetime. In all natural advantages Cheltenham was strong. To his mind, of all the towns of England that he had visited, it approached nearest of any in its resemblance to a foreign spa, and the Central Spa now added to it promised to do a great deal to attract the sick in much larger numbers than of late. Moreover, Cheltenham had one commanding advantage that few other towns could claim—that it was a good resort at any time of the year. To be open all the year round was a great advertisement for any water, for it was a curious admission to have to make of a valuable remedy that it could only be used from May to September. With regard to diet he did not think it possible to work a watering place nearly up to its proper level of advantage unless the managers of the hotels acted with medical opinion regarding the general principles of food and cooking. It had always been his belief that much of the benefit so often derived from a course at Carlsbad and other foreign spas was due to the fact that the hotels had certain customary rules for guidance in those matters, and that it was not possible to obtain other than a simple diet. He did not think that anything of the sort was to be found in England, but he hoped that in attempting again to rehabilitate their waters, some plan might be agreed upon that would favour that end. Garden cities were being started. Cheltenham called itself "The Garden Town of England." But why not be also a city of plain diet, where tired brains, satiated stomachs, congested livers, fatty hearts, might find their cure in plain living, water drinking, and high thinking? In former times Cheltenham prided herself on having such a fine system of baths that no two persons need wash in the same water, and it was now necessary for their reputation to show how much progress had been made, more particularly because a complete system of baths was of great value, not only in itself but also as an adjunct to a course of mineral waters. They had already a fine swimming bath, and brine baths for the individual, than which none could be better or more comfortable, but it was much to be wished that the system might be made still more complete by adding thereto the various douches and electric baths that were included in every up-to-date installation. But water cures had another inestimable advantage, often missed by man and medicine; they gave the doctor a chance of thinking about and watching human nature in some of its many faulty moods without worry and distraction. The present-day mood of most people was: a pain here, it must be assuaged at once; and the remedy in some shape or other must be found in the chemist's shop round the corner. A lump there, and the knife was at hand for immediate excision; there was no thought of bearing and suffering on the part of the patient, no chance of waiting and watching on the part of the doctor. And the consequence was that they became bewildered with the latest inventions, were always testing the new ones, and forgetting those that were behind. There were many good drugs that were simply forgotten, buried by the multiplicity of those that had come after them. Men ran about for this cure and that, as they put it, to get this or that disease out of them. And it was for that they visited the various watering places; but it was not his view of the value of drinking waters. The value of waters was that they there put themselves under conditions that made for health, and they ought to co-operate with a trained eye that could watch the process and steer them. When he (Dr. Goodhart) went to a cure so-called, he took no medicine save the water that he had gone to drink, and the doctor had thus presented to him what was practically experiment after experiment, each carried out as nearly as possible under similar conditions, and the only things which came in to mar the accuracy of comparison were the bias of the observer and the individuality of the subject. Those, he admitted, were important qualifications, but it was no small advantage to obtain even that degree of precision. The skilled observer at a watering place who kept himself alert had a magnificent opportunity of adding to medical knowledge and benefiting mankind, for he was as it were a scout, who was planted on the borderland between health and disease, to watch the ebb and flow of the tide of life. And yet although that was true, he was not aware that much real addition to physiology or medicine had as yet come from any one frequented watering-place. They had one English worker in Dr. Oliver of Harrogate, but for the rest—and he spoke

far more of abroad than at home, because they had so few frequented places—few, if any, additions to the knowledge had come to them. But the reasons for that were not far to seek. In the first place, the public resorted to water cures with but a half-serious purpose in many cases. Many never saw a doctor while at the spa, and few came under careful observation. Next, the monotony of conditions, again and again repeated, tended, as they could readily imagine, to envelop in every one a mere routine; and, lastly, there was the inherent difficulty of the subject. They had to study deranged function and how it passed into disease. For example, if he educated his brain in wrong methods and thought—if impulsive, and he encouraged its impulsiveness, or restless, and played upon its restlessness, whether in thought or muscular command; or lethargic, and he let it give way to an excessive dormancy—many thus slept too much—he passed into a gradually-increasing bad habit, an unhealthy condition, in that it gradually passed on and on until it was entirely beyond his control, and then it had become a disease. Function in excess had become disease. In the case of the brain they called that insanity; but was it otherwise with the other organs and tissues? Of course not. The same law prevailed everywhere. What man sowed that should he reap; but they were so much more familiar with the changes worked by disease in those other parts, that they even sometimes permitted themselves to argue from thence that there could be no error of function that was not preceded by structural change. But no physiologist could question that in stereotyped aberrancy of function lay the beginning of such structural changes, and that in its very earliest stage structural change was either non-existent or so imperceptible and infinitesimal in degree that it could be righted in a moment. It was at the outposts of health that the doctor at a mineral spring planted himself, and they could all see how difficult, almost impossibly difficult, was his position. He doubted very much that mineral waters washed out this and purged away that, or that their chemical action, if chemical in any sense, was of any such clumsy sort. Rather would he think of them as full of a nascent activity, aiding here, persuading in another quarter, stimulating there, in accord with the apparently boundless possibilities, as they knew, of even inanimate influences as yet only on the threshold of being recognized, but which, boundless as they seemed to be, were yet in all probability far below the infinite possibilities wrapped up in the energy of all animate existences. If in what he had said it should seem that he had told them little to aid them in utilizing their springs, he would venture to plead that the doctor must ever be mostly one who led others to help themselves, and who too often having done that, must trust the larger hope and leave the rest.

A vote of thanks to Dr. Goodhart for his address was moved by Dr. Ferguson, who declared that the Cheltenham waters were superior to those of Homburg, Kissingen, Baden-Baden, and Wiesbaden, and he did not know any waters in France equal to them. It was the duty of all of them to do what they could to further the use of the Cheltenham waters and to extend the knowledge of their healing properties.

The vote of thanks was seconded by Mr. H. Stroud and supported by Dr. Armstrong, who praised the beauties of the town, and observed that the Winter Garden was full of great possibilities. In his opinion the Cheltenham waters formed the one drinking cure in England. He advised the town to make life as bright and pleasant in Cheltenham as at any of the Continental spas.

The proceedings closed with a vote of thanks to the Mayor.

CONTRACT MEDICAL PRACTICE.

FEES FOR ACCIDENTS.

GREENHORN writes that he is surgeon to some clubs, and has recently attended two members for fracture of the leg. He proposed to charge for them on the Poor-law scale, but was told by the secretary that the club paid no extra fees for attendance on such cases. He asks for advice under the circumstances.

*** It is to be feared that our correspondent cannot claim any extra payment for these cases, as they are included in his ordinary duties as surgeon to the club. Practitioners about to take clubs at the usual inadequate rates of payment would do well to reflect on our correspondent's experience.

THE ANNUAL MEETING AT TORONTO.

Reception Committees at Quebec and Montreal.

WE are informed that reception committees have been formed by the profession in Quebec and in Montreal to meet members travelling by the St. Lawrence route to Toronto, and to help them through the formalities attending arrival. The Chairman of the Committee in Quebec is Dr. M. J. Ahern, and the Secretaries are Dr. Stevenson and Dr. Daigneau. There is no doubt that both committees will take means to ensure that members who have any time to spare shall have an opportunity of seeing all that is interesting in the two cities, and there is much of medical interest in both.

Railway Certificates.

We understand that the Honorary Local Secretaries in Toronto have sent railway certificates to all members who before the end of May had expressed their intention of visiting Toronto. Any member who may have since determined to make the journey should communicate with Mr. Guy Elliston, the General Secretary of the Association, 429, Strand, London, W.C., who is also authorized to sign certificates. A separate certificate will be required for each member of the party, and under the regulations of the Eastern Canadian Passenger Association duplicates cannot be issued, so that it will be necessary to carefully preserve the certificate issued.

Trip to Vancouver and Victoria.

It was announced last week that those members who hope after the meeting to make the great trip across the continent to Vancouver are requested to send in their names as early as possible to the Honorary Local Secretaries of the Annual Meeting of the British Medical Association, Medical Building, The University, Toronto.

Since then information has been received from the Executive Committee in Toronto to the effect that a communication has been received from the Tourist Association of Victoria, inviting members to prolong their tour so as to include that city, and promising that everything shall be done to make the visit to this, which boasts itself to be the most English city in Canada, both pleasant and profitable. The cost of the round trip from Toronto to Vancouver and back will be £13 11s.; the extra fare for the tour to include Victoria will not very materially increase the expenditure.

METROPOLITAN PROVIDENT MEDICAL ASSOCIATION.

MR. FRANCIS BUXTON presided over the meeting of the Metropolitan Provident Medical Association on June 21st, at 42, Grosvenor Gardens, London, when the report of the Council of the Association was submitted.

The annual report of the Council for the year 1905 stated that there were twenty-one branches of the Association, consisting of sixteen dispensaries and five medical clubs, with a roll of 12,386 cards, family and single. The receipts from the provident members in 1905 amounted to £5,240 6s. 7d., or, including Hospital Saturday Fund payments, £5,496 16s. 7d. Of this amount the medical officers received £3,279 3s. 10d., making, with the sums expended on dispensers and drugs, a total of £4,841 15s. 6d. devoted to the medical part of the work, or 88 per cent. of the income. With regard to the branch work in detail it was stated that of the twenty-one branches, fourteen maintained or improved their position during 1905, some of them making a considerable advance, and where losses occurred they were, in most cases, quite trifling. There was awakened interest and healthy growth visible in some of the older branches, notably perhaps at Woolwich, Tottenham, and Notting Hill. Those signs of progress were the more satisfactory in the face of some conditions adverse to the promotion of thrift in general and medical providence in particular. Slackness of employment during the past year might no doubt be reckoned as one of these. Another was the competition of free medical agencies and missions of various kinds in the neighbourhood of provident dispensaries, as well as the existence of institutions ostensibly provident, but with objectionable features such as a very low scale of contribution, no wage limit, and a system of indiscriminate advertisement. Besides those, the hospital